

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Conference Committees
OF THE
BOARD OF OFFICERS SEVENTH REGT.,
N. G. S. N. Y.
AND THE
VETERANS OF THE SEVENTH REG'T,
N. G. S. N. Y.

Published by the Veterans of the Seventh Regt., N. G. S. N. Y.

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At a meeting of the Board of Management, Veterans of the
Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y., held June 23, 1885,
the following communication was presented :

SEVENTH REGIMENT, N. G., S. N. Y.,
New York, June 9, 1885.

HENRY L. FREELAND,
Adjutant and Secretary Veterans of the Seventh Regiment :

DEAR SIR :

At a regular meeting of the Board of Officers of this
Regiment, held Saturday evening, June 6th, on motion of
Captain Steele, it was

Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed to con-
fer with a similar committee from the Veteran Association
with a view to devise some means by which the differences
existing between the Association and this Board may be
harmonized. In case of action by your Association on the
subject, I will thank you to communicate the same to me.

Very respectfully, etc.,

WM. H. PALMER,
*Capt. I. R. P. and Secretary Board of Officers,
Seventh Regt., N. G. S. N. Y.*

On motion, the communication from the Board of Officers
was received and the following adopted :

Resolved, That the Colonel be authorized to name a committee from this organization, when he is notified of the appointment of the committee called for in the resolution of the Board of Officers Seventh Regiment.

Committees appointed under the above resolution :

BOARD OF OFFICERS 7TH RGT.	VETERANS 7TH REGIMENT.
Lieut.-Col. Geo. Moore Smith	Colonel E. M. Crawford.
Captain Wm. C. Casey.	Captain E. G. Arthur.
Captain H. S. Steele.	Captain Henry W. T. Mali.
Captain Daniel Appleton.	Lieut. L. G. Woodhouse.
Captain A. W. Conover.	Adjutant H. L. Freeland.

At the first meeting of the Conference Committees, held at the Armory, September 18, 1885, the Chairman of the Committee of the Board of Officers presented the following :

NEW YORK, September 18th, 1885.

The undersigned, a Committee of the Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment, appointed under a resolution adopted June, 1885, "to confer with a similar Committee from the Veteran Association, with a view to devise some means by which the differences existing between the Association and this Board may be harmonized," respectfully submit to the Committee of the Veteran Association, the following :

The Association of the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment was chartered March 11th, 1861, and its objects were stated in its charter as follows :

"SECTION 2. The objects of said Corporation are to afford pecuniary relief to indigent or reduced members and

their widows and children: to promote social union and fellowship, and to preserve and continue the recollections of service in the National Guard."

For many years entire harmony existed between the Veteran Association and the Officers and members of the Regiment, and it would doubtless have continued until the present time, had not a uniformed battalion been organized and allowed to exist in the Veteran Association. Conceding that the uniformed battalion was organized for the purpose of strengthening the Veteran Association by increasing the interest of its members in its affairs, and granting that there was never any intention of antagonizing or injuring the regiment in any way, or of provoking the hostility of its officers or members, yet it must be admitted that the result has been unfavorable to the harmony and mutual confidence which should exist between the two organizations, and that there is no probability that the official representatives of the Seventh Regiment will ever view with favor or approval the existence of any uniformed battalion that assumes or uses the name of that Regiment. The Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment, at a meeting held March 1st, 1884, adopted the following resolution :

"Resolved, That the Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y., disapproves of the use of military titles by those who do not hold or who have not held lawful commissions of the grade or rank indicated by such titles; and disapproves of the wearing of military uniforms by those who are not in the military service of the United States or of the several States, or who are not veterans of

the late war ; and disapproves of the use of the name and numerical designation of this Regiment by any other *uniformed* corps."

It is confidently asserted by this Committee that the opinions expressed in the above resolution still prevail generally among the officers of the Seventh Regiment, and that they will continue to prevail for all time to come. Such opinions are not based upon, or to be attributed to any personal hostility to the officers or members of the uniformed battalion of the Veteran Association ; on the contrary, it is the fact that the officers of the Regiment entertain the most friendly feeling towards all who have served faithfully and honorably in its ranks in the past, and who maintain an interest in its present and future welfare.

As the uniformed battalion is the only cause of difference and dissension between the Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment and the Veteran Association, and as it is desirable that entire harmony and good-will should prevail, this Committee earnestly requests that the Veteran Association limit and confine its functions and prerogatives to the objects expressed in its charter, and that the wearing of military uniforms, and the insignia of military rank by its members, unless in active military service, be discontinued. This Committee also respectfully suggests and requests that military titles for officers of the Veteran Association be abolished, so that all possible cause of difference will be removed. The veterans of the last war, in all their societies, have found it advisable and necessary for obvious reasons, that the officers of such societies should not use military

titles, and the same reasons exist in a greater degree in associations of exempt or veteran members of the National Guard.

Respectfully submitted by this Committee, with the hope that the pleasant relations which formerly existed between the Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment and the Veteran Association may be entirely restored.

GEO. MOORE SMITH,

Lieut Colonel,

WILLIAM C. CASEY,

Captain Co. "I,"

DANIEL APPLETON,

Captain Co. "F,"

A. W. CONOVER,

Captain Co. "A,"

*Committee of Conference of Board of Officers
of Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y.*

The Committees adjourned to September 29th.

On September 22d the following letter was received by Colonel Crawford.

NEW YORK, September 21st, 1885.

COLONEL E. M. CRAWFORD,

*Chairman of Committee of Conference from the
Veterans of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y.*

COLONEL—I have the honor to inclose a copy of the answer to the suggestion or request made by you in respect to the withdrawal of the circular of February, 1884, issued by

Generals and Colonels, which answer, as Chairman of the Committee of Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment, I submitted at the meeting of September 18th.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,

GEO. MOORE SMITH.

*Lieut. Colonel Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y. ;
Chairman of Committee of Board of Officers.*

NEW YORK, September 18th, 1885

*This Committee has no power to withdraw or to modify the circular or protest against "Uniformed Veteran Battalions" published in February, 1884, and which was signed by the Generals and Colonels of the National Guard of New York and Brooklyn. The officers referred to, with one exception, have not withdrawn their names from that protest, but have re-affirmed its principles in a protest to the Legislature of the State during the present year against the passage of any law to legalize or recognize "Uniformed Veteran Battalions," and nearly every commanding officer in the entire National Guard of the State united with them in such protest. In addition to this, the Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment, by resolution passed March 1, 1884, approved the *principles* expressed in the protest of Generals and Colonels of February, 1884, and cannot be expected to reverse this action under any circumstances. Nor can it be expected that the present or any future Commandant of

* It will be noticed that this document (written after the adjournment, September 18th) is not signed, and the only paper giving it any authority is the letter of Lieut. Col. George Moore Smith.

the Seventh Regiment, or that its Board of Officers will, at any time hereafter, differ with the National Guard of the State on this subject, or will ever repudiate the principles enunciated in the circular of February, 1884, in the resolution of March 1, 1884, and in the protest to the Legislature in 1885.

The following communication was submitted by the Committee of the Veteran Organization at the adjourned meeting September 29th :

NEW YORK, September 29, 1885.

*To the Committee of the Board of Officers
of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y. :*

The Committee of the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment, appointed in response to the resolution of your Board, adopted June 6, 1885, has received your statement of Sept. 18th inst.

We meet you as the representatives of your Board, in all good faith and fellowship, uniting with you in the desire to harmonize existing differences.

The phraseology of the resolution that created our committees, implies a mutual grievance. That of your Board of Officers is the existence of a Unformed Battalion within the membership of the Veterans, and the adoption of military titles and corresponding insignia of rank by the officers of the Veteran Organization.

Our Committee feels that your objections should be supported by evidence of detriment to the interests of the Regiment, and we will join your Committee in giving this sub-

ject most earnest consideration : assuring you that no sacrifice will be esteemed too great for the Veterans to make, to maintain and advance the prosperity of the Seventh Regiment. And it is a noteworthy fact that this sentiment may be found throughout all the official utterances that have been made in connection with the subject before us.

The Veterans would have received such objections in a kindly spirit had they been first presented in a respectful and fraternal manner, and would have evinced at once, a desire to settle the question by the method which has now been adopted. In a circular published on February 19, 1884, and signed by the Colonel of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y., the following language appears: "So long as any *uniformed* battalion bears the name of a National Guard regiment, such regiment will be held responsible by the public for any want of discipline in such *uniformed* battalion, and for the unsoldierly and ungentlemanly conduct of any of its members while in uniform." * * * "Men of mature years, who leave their business to parade the public streets with music and banners, and decked out with sword, chapeau, and feathers, or who consent to appear in public in other than the ordinary attire of the citizen and the gentlemen, should surely have some substantial reason, or some manly and noble object to justify them in so doing, and to secure themselves from public ridicule."

In this circular, the title of "Veterans" was held up to public derision and ridicule, a title granted to the organization by the Legislature of the State, before the War of the Rebellion, and never before disputed or assailed.

In a statement signed by the Colonel of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y., under date of February 26, 1884, the following language appears. "The usefulness of the Association (referring to the "Veterans of the Seventh Regiment") is greatly impaired, because the men who control it are chiefly interested in fancy uniforms, parades, excursions, and other festivities ; that consequently the benevolent fund of the Association, which should long since have reached a large amount, is now only \$5,000, and very inadequate to the relief of needy members and their families." This insinuation that the expenses of the Battalion were a drain upon the Benevolent Fund, was distinctly and officially refuted and denied, in a report of the Paymaster—endorsed by the certificate of the Chairman of the Finance Committee, made on March 8, 1884, a copy of which report was sent to the Colonel of the Seventh Regiment, and publicly acknowledged by him. Nevertheless, in July of the same year, in a pamphlet published over his signature, he reiterated the charge that the Benevolent Fund was threatened by the existence of a Uniformed Battalion. These charges and insinuations, and the language above referred to, constitute the grievance of the Veteran Organization. In order to meet the wishes of your Board of Officers, and bring the entire subject to an amicable settlement, we deem it necessary at the outset to divest it of all personality.

We therefore ask, as a basis for the settlement of the differences existing between your Board of Officers and the Veteran Organization, that the charges, insinuations, and objectionable language contained in a circular published on

February 19, 1884, and in a statement dated February 26, 1884, and in a pamphlet published in July, 1884, (under the title of "THE VETERAN CONTROVERSY"), be withdrawn by the Colonel of the Seventh Regiment.

For how can we, in behalf of the Veteran Organization, remain silent or passive under imputations which reflect upon our dignity, our self-respect, our manhood and citizenship, while such erroneous, unjust and humiliating charges stand without justification, apology, or correction.

Obligation to our honored dead, Col. W. R. Vermilye, Col. Marshall Lefferts, Col. Wm. A. Pond, Col. Cyrus H. Loutrel, Col. Abram Denike, Col. Henry C. Shumway, and Aaron Kemp, Wm. A. Burtis, James Black, Chas. E. Bostwick, A. H. Muller, Jr., Wm. M. Gambling, John J. McLaren, and Chas. W. Price, and proper regard for our esteemed and faithful comrades, many of whom served with distinction in the War of the Rebellion, known and revered in all the walks of life, as honored citizens, press upon us, and seem to demand a full and honorable vindication at your hands.

Respectfully submitted, with a hearty reciprocation of the wish of your Committee, that harmony may be fully restored between your Board of Officers and the Veteran Organization.

E. M. CRAWFORD,
E. G. ARTHUR,
HENRY W. T. MALL,
L. G. WOODHOUSE,
H. L. FREELAND,

*Committee of Conference of the Veterans of the
Seventh Regiment.*

The Conference Committees adjourned subject to the call of the chairmen.

A meeting of the Conference Committees was called for November 5th, when the Committee of the Board of Officers submitted the following:

NEW YORK, November 5th, 1885.

To the Committee of the Veterans

of the Seventh Regiment N. G. S. N. Y.:

At the first meeting with your Committee, held September 18th, the Chairman of the Committee of the Board of Officers, in response to your suggestion that a withdrawal of certain parts of publications in respect to *Uniformed Veterans* would be necessary, prior to any consideration of the request of this Committee that the use of military uniforms and of the insignia of military rank and of military titles should be abandoned, submitted a written statement to the effect that the withdrawal or modification of the circular of Generals and Colonels of the First and Second Divisions N. G. S. N. Y., published February 19, 1884, was impossible, and the Chairman also stated verbally that he was authorized to say that under no circumstances would the Colonel of the Seventh Regiment withdraw his name from said circular, or from any part of it, or from anything to which he had subscribed his name in connection with, or incident to, the subject in controversy. The Colonel of the Seventh Regiment has repeatedly stated, publicly and privately, that he has not written or subscribed

to anything that was intended to reflect unfavorably upon the character or integrity of the officers or members of any Uniformed Veteran Battalion or Veteran Association, or that in his opinion can be properly so construed, and that whatever he has written or signed on this subject was simply in opposition to what he considered a military abuse, detrimental to the interests and welfare of the Seventh Regiment and of the National Guard generally.

This Committee cannot ask or expect, nor does it approve of the withdrawal by the Colonel of the Seventh Regiment of the paragraphs quoted by you as objectionable, for the following reasons :

I.—The circular of February 19, 1884, signed by Generals and Colonels, was not *personal* in its character, as it mentioned the name of no person, nor of any corps, organization or association; but it condemned a practice or a system, which the signers deemed to be prejudicial to the interests of the National Guard. It was simply an earnest and vigorous protest against the use of military titles by men not in any military service, and not veterans of the war, and against the wearing of the insignia of military rank by men who do not, and who have not, held lawful commissions entitling them to such distinction, and against the use by any *uniformed* corps of the name and numerical designation of any regiment of the National Guard without its consent. All the *principles* of said circular were approved and endorsed by the Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment at a meeting held in March, 1884, in the following resolution :

“ *Resolved*, That the Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment N. G. S. N. Y. disapproves of the use of military titles by those who do not hold, or who have not held, lawful commissions of the grade or rank indicated by such titles; and disapproves of the wearing of military uniforms by those who are not in the military service of the United States or the several States, or who are not veterans of the late war; and disapproves of the use of the name and numerical designation of this Regiment by any other *uniformed* corps ”

II.—In reference to your quotation of the latter part of a sentence, the whole sentence being as follows :

“ Those who are charged by law with the maintenance of the good name of any regiment should not be held responsible for the conduct of those over whom they have no control ; but so long as any *uniformed* battalion bears the name of a National Guard regiment, such regiment will be held responsible by the public for any want of discipline in such *uniformed* battalion, and for the unsoldierly and ungentlemanly conduct of any of its members while in uniform.”

This Committee is of the opinion that the Seventh Regiment must necessarily be held responsible by the public for the discipline and conduct of the members of any *uniformed* battalion that bears its name while they are in the uniform of such battalion, although it is powerless to enforce its military discipline, except upon the commissioned officers and enlisted men actively serving in the regiment. And this Committee believes that the conduct and discipline of the officers and members of the regiment, who are held to

military duty under the laws of the State, is a sufficient responsibility, and is all that the regiment should be compelled to assume or to be accountable for.

III.—In reference to the quotation as follows :

“Men of mature years who leave their business to parade the public streets with music and banners, and decked out with sword, chapeau and feathers, or who would consent to appear in public in other than the ordinary attire of the citizen and the gentleman, should surely have some substantial reason, or some manly and noble object to justify them in so doing, and to secure themselves from public ridicule.”

The Committee admits that there is a vein of ridicule in this paragraph, which, if applied to any individual by name, or perhaps to any individual organization, might be considered objectionable ; but as it is not personal, and is signed not by a single officer, but by all the leading representative officers of New York and Brooklyn, and as ridicule is a legitimate weapon which is frequently employed against such public practices, systems, organizations and parties as are subjects of opposition, it does not seem reasonable that the paragraph should be regarded as personally offensive.

IV.—In reference to the quotation as follows :

“The usefulness of the Association (referring to the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment) is greatly impaired, because the men who control it are chiefly interested in fancy uniforms, parades, excursions and other festivities ; that, consequently the benevolent fund of the Association,

which should long since have reached a large amount, is now only \$5,000, and very inadequate to the relief of needy members and their families."

This Committee cannot concede that this language implies or insinuates that the Benevolent Fund of the Veteran Association has been in any manner misused or misapplied. It simply asserts that if the efforts of the active members of the Association had been especially directed to the benevolent objects of its charter, and not to the interests of a uniformed corps, the Benevolent Fund would have been materially enlarged, and the benevolent purposes of the Association consequently promoted.

V.—In reference to your objection to that part of the circular of February 19, 1884, which relates to the use of the title of "Veterans," this Committee states that previous to the war (1861-65) the title of *Veteran* had no particular significance, and was not inappropriate at that time to an association of exempt members of the National Guard. But at the end of a long war this title became popularly associated with those who had served the country in its army or navy, and while such title might continue to be not inappropriate for a *social and benevolent* organization of the exempt members of a militia regiment, it hardly seems proper for a *uniformed* battalion of such an association to publicly parade as "Veterans," and especially for very young men to appear *in uniform* as "Veterans" after a peaceful service of five years in the National Guard. It is to the use of the title "Veteran" by men *in military uniform* who did not serve actively during the war that this objection particularly applies.

The Committee notices your reference to some of the distinguished and honored dead, whose names adorn the pages of the history of this Regiment, and whose memory is cherished as a legitimate and valuable heritage by its present officers and members. The opposition which exists to *uniformed* veteran battalions, and the controversy which has resulted from such opposition, cast no unfavorable reflection upon their character or honor ; they have not been assailed, and therefore need no vindication. Their fame and good name can be safely intrusted, now and for all future time, to the care of their successors, in the management of the Regiment which they loved so well, and served so devotedly.

This Committee also notices with pleasure your expressions of devotion to the Regiment, and of willingness to make great sacrifices to promote its interests. Loyalty to the Regiment in every particular, is believed to be the first duty of its veteran and exempt members, and this Committee can, therefore, confidently appeal to you to acquiesce in the resolution of the Board of Officers, adopted March, 1884, and above quoted, and to accede to the request of this Committee to the same effect, submitted to you September 18th, 1885. You will doubtless admit, that the Board of Officers is composed of men distinguished for long and faithful service, and of great experience in the affairs of the Regiment, and is, therefore, eminently capable of deciding what is detrimental to the interests of the organization, and what will promote its welfare. While conceding to all, the right of opinion, this Committee believes that as the

responsibility for the management of the Regiment devolves by law upon its officers, it is the duty of all who are interested in its welfare, and it is especially the duty of all veteran and exempt members to concur cheerfully in the views and wishes of the Board of Officers as officially expressed. That your Committee will, by such concurrence, remove all causes of difference and subjects of controversy, and thereby fully restore the harmony and confidence which formerly existed between the Officers of the Regiment and the Officers of the Veteran Association, is the hope and earnest wish of this Committee.

This Committee understood, at the meeting of the two Committees, held September 29th, that your Committee assented to the suggestion of Captain Steele, that the withdrawal of what had been written and printed upon the matter at issue, would not be expected, in case there was an assurance that no personal reflections upon the integrity and character of the officers and members of the Veteran Association had been intended, and that this would be entirely satisfactory, and would remove the alleged grievance. The authoritative statement in the first paragraph of this paper, as to the position of the Colonel of the Seventh Regiment on this subject, is in accord and in compliance with such understanding.

GEO. MOORE SMITH, Lieut. Colonel,

WM. C. CASEY, Capt. Co. "L."

DANIEL APPLETON, Capt. Co. "F."

A. W. CONOVER, Capt. Co. "A."

*Committee of Conference of Board of Officers
of Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y.*

On November 7th the following was presented by the
Committee of the Veteran Organization :

NEW YORK, November 7th, 1885.

*To the Committee of the Board of Officers
of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y.*

The Committee of the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y., acknowledge receipt of your communication of November 5th inst., and, after due consideration of same, most respectfully beg to say, that, in our judgment, it introduces and discusses matters, which our Committee on behalf of the Veteran Organization cannot consider, until an official and formal compliance with our request of September 29th, 1885, be made, in manner as public and as broad as the publications referred to in our statement addressed to your Committee on that date.

Respectfully submitted,

E. M. CRAWFORD,

E. G. ARTHUR,

HENRY W. T. MALL,

L. G. WOODHOUSE,

H. L. FREELAND,

*Committee of the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment,
N. G. S. N. Y.*

On November 13th the following communication was received by Colonel, E. M. Crawford, Chairman of the Committee of the Veteran Organization :

NEW YORK, November 12th, 1885.

*To the Committee of the Veterans
of the Seventh Regiment :*

Your communication of November 7th was duly received, and was presented to the Board of Officers at a regular meeting, held at 8:30 o'clock, P. M., on that day, together with all the papers that have been submitted at the meetings of the Conference Committees. The whole subject was thoroughly discussed, and after due deliberation the Board of Officers adopted the following resolutions :

“Resolved, That the Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y., respectfully requests the Veteran Association and its uniformed battalion to discontinue the use of military titles and military uniforms, and the insignia of military rank.

“Resolved, That the report of the Committee of this Board appointed to confer with a similar Committee of the Veteran Association, be and is hereby adopted, and the action of the Committee be and is approved.

“Resolved, That this Board approves the position of the Colonel of this Regiment, as authoritatively stated in the first paragraph of the communication of the Committee, dated November 5th, and does not approve of the withdrawal (as requested by the Committee of the Veteran Association,) of any part of any paper upon the subject referred to, to which the Colonel of the Regiment has subscribed his name and official title.”

AYES.—Lieutenant Colonel Smith, Captains Conover, Steele, Pollard, Rhoads, Appleton, Abrams, Mills and Leferts; Lieutenants Pawling, Haight, Tackaberry, Schermerhorn, Ware, McLewee, Smith, Dewson, and Lydecker; Adjutant Rand, Surgeon Stimson, Captain Palmer, I. R. P., Assistant Surgeon Morris, Quartermaster Long and Commissary Schuyler.—24.

NAYS.—Major Allison.—1.

Not voting.—Colonel Clark.—1.

Total, 26.

The following officers, who were absent from the meeting, have approved the above resolutions, viz.: Captains Kipp and Casey; Lieutenants Fisk, Jones, McDougall, Cooper, Harper, Voorhees, Allen, Sage, Kirkland, and Chaplain Weston.—12.

Whole number of Officers,	-	-	-	-	38
In favor of Resolutions,	-	-	-	-	36
Opposed to Resolutions,	-	-	-	-	1
Not voting,	-	-	-	-	1

You will notice that the action of this Committee is sustained by the Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment with great unanimity, not only in the request made September 18th, that the Veteran Association and its uniformed battalion should discontinue, in the interest of union and harmony, the use of military titles, military uniforms, and the insignia of military rank, but also in the opinion that the grievance you allege in your communication of Sept. 29th, is removed by the authoritative statement, in the first paragraph of the communication of this Committee, dated November 5th. This Committee again earnestly but

respectfully requests that the Committee of the Veteran Association will give favorable consideration to the request of this Committee dated September 18th, and to the first resolution of the Board of Officers passed November 7th, and thereby remove forever all differences that exist between the Seventh Regiment and the Veteran Association. Your expressions of devotion to the Seventh Regiment and of willingness to make great sacrifices to promote its interests, lead this Committee to confidently hope that your action will result in the restoration of the harmony and good will which all agree is most desirable.

Referring to your statement that the objections of the Board of Officers to the existence of a Uniformed Battalion within the membership of the Veterans, and the adoption of military titles and corresponding insignia of rank by the Veteran Organization, should be supported by evidence of detriment to the interests of the Regiment, this Committee desires to say, that this whole subject has already been exhausted in personal interviews, in the newspapers, in a variety of publications and in communications to the Legislature, and this Committee could add nothing to what has been said, written and published. This Committee could expect no result from a renewal of the discussion of the subject, and believes that an affirmative or negative answer to the communication of this Committee dated September 18th would more properly terminate the duties imposed upon the Conference Committees, and with more satisfaction to all concerned. But this Committee, in its desire to remove the cause of difference between the Board of

Officers and the Veteran Association will cheerfully concur, if in your opinion further discussion will lead to favorable results.

Respectfully submitted,

GEO. MOORE SMITH, Lieut. Colonel,

WM. C. CASEY, Capt. Co. "I."

HENRY S. STEELE, Capt. Co. "B."

DANIEL APPLETON, Capt. Co. "F."

A. W. CONOVER, Capt. Co. "A."

*Committee of Conference of the Board of Officers
Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y.*

The following communication has been delivered to the Committee of the Board of Officers Seventh Regiment :

NEW YORK, December, 16, 1885.

*To the Committee of the Board of Officers
of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y. :*

GENTLEMEN—We have the honor to acknowledge your latest communication of November 12th, containing the request, in form of a resolve, of certain members of the Board of Officers of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y., that "the Veteran Association and its uniformed battalion discontinue the use of military titles and military uniforms, and the insignia of military rank."

This request is so extraordinary, that we trust you will excuse us for reminding you, that neither the Military Code nor Regulations for the National Guard, recognize your Board as other than a voluntary "association" to form by-

laws, rules, and regulations not inconsistent therewith and conformable thereto, by which, after they shall first have been approved by the Division Judge Advocate, to bind yourselves in such restricted matters as extra evening drills and parades, and others of like concern.

We do not discover, therefore, that your Association is authorized to request the Veteran Organization, which is largely composed of those who are your seniors in years, and in service to the State, to discontinue the use of military titles, lawfully assumed over a quarter of a century ago, as a necessary incident of their organization, and recognized and confirmed by the Legislature of the State in special statute, and required by such statute to be used for certain specific purposes.

Surely the gentlemen who have been induced in this extra-official way, to thus formulate so inadmissible a proposition, could not have maturely considered that it could not be granted without an enabling act of the Legislature.

The friendship and interest we have always manifested towards you, would induce us to respectfully entertain any request, fancied or real, and whether made with or without authority.

You will permit us to observe, however, that there should always be some substantial basis for it, as for example, a specific allegation that the Veteran organization had, in some way, been a detriment to the active regiment; but although this was clearly pointed out to you in our first reply to the first communication with which we were favored, none has been formulated or presented, and you

will permit us to add that, in our judgment, none can be presented.

The unexampled prosperity of the regiment, with full ranks and desirable applicants awaiting admission, on the happening of vacancies, negative in every particular, any suggestion that the Veteran organization can be other than a valuable auxiliary, and yet the only excuse which could be offered for the request you have submitted, would be, that, in some way the Veteran Organization had prevented the attainment of the very prosperity, which gives our members so much pleasure.

In the correspondence which you have instituted with us, we must confess, that some of your suggestions have had, at least, the appearance of novelty, as for example, that it is the duty of all, who are interested in the regiment's welfare, and "especially the duty of all veteran and exempt members to concur cheerfully in the *views* and *wishes* of the Board of Officers as officially expressed."

The Veteran organization yields nothing to the present gentlemen who constitute the officers of the active regiment, in interest in the regiment's welfare, and we esteem it a fortunate as well as a significant circumstance, that the regiment has thus far for twenty-seven years, looked to us for advice, encouragement, co-operation, and substantial aid, when needed.

Permit us to observe however that "views and wishes," to merit concurrence, should always be grounded in sound reasons, and we do not think, we should be deemed hypercritical if we do not favorably consider views and wishes

which, in our judgment, cannot be measured by that test.

Although the gentlemen, who united in the before-mentioned request, have not ventured to present any facts in support of it, yet in the course of your correspondence, you have urged two reasons why the Veteran organization should relinquish its chartered name and effective and influential character and become a loose association, for a merely benevolent object, contrary to the intent of its honored founders.

The first is because, as you say, the title "Veteran" has become "popularly associated with those who had served the country in its Army or Navy."

On this premise, you do us the honor to say, as to the Veteran organization of the Seventh, that "it hardly seems proper for a uniformed battalion, of such an association to publicly parade as veterans," but you nevertheless also say that "previous to the war of 1861-1865, the title of veteran had no particular significance, and was not inappropriate to an "association of exempt members of the National Guard."

This first objection resolves itself therefore into a question of taste—not propriety; and as the Legislature conferred the title, we trust you will excuse us for saying, that in such a matter, we ought to be the best judges.

We fail to discover but one of the honored veterans of the late war, among the gentlemen of your Board, who united in the request to which we have been constrained to except, but we have many such in our Veteran organization who have never yet discovered that our "legal" title has in any way detracted from their fairly earned laurels.

No well informed person can be misled in the applicancy of the generic expression "veteran," which must always be coupled with something descriptive, to convey any intelligible meaning, as veteran of the war of 1812, or of the war with Mexico, a veteran diplomatist.

The legal title, "Veteran of the Seventh Regiment," has always had, as you know, and as all well informed persons know, a distinctive meaning, and designates those, who have honorably served the State, in that regiment, the full term or terms prescribed by law, to acquire exemption from ordinary military duty, and who have thereafter joined the Veteran organization.

The "Veterans of the Seventh Regiment," therefore, as you are aware, include almost all those who, while serving the State as officers or enlisted men in the Seventh Regiment, were called into the military service of the United States in 1861, 1862, and 1863 for brief periods of field duty.

We regret, therefore, that you should have presented so untenable an objection, and trust that the "propriety" of our conduct in continuing the use of a designation conferred, by law, will not again be the subject of animadversion, from those who derive their official existence only from the law.

The second and last objection, which you have urged against the continuance of the Veteran organization is that "the Seventh Regiment, must necessarily be held responsible to the public for the discipline and conduct of the members of any uniformed battalion that bears its name, while they are in the uniform of such battalion, although it is powerless

to enforce its military discipline, except upon the commissioned officers and enlisted men actively serving in the regiment," and that the regiment should therefore, only be compelled to assume, or be accountable for the conduct and discipline of its own officers and men.

Permit us to say, that we cannot assent to your proposition, that the Seventh Regiment, or, in other words, its Commanding officer, must necessarily be held responsible to the public for the discipline and conduct of the Veteran organization, composed, as it is, of men of mature years, whose previous faithful and honorable service in the active regiment for the full legal term, has constituted the indispensable basis of their respective applications for membership in the Veteran organization.

We have always hitherto considered it measurably our concern, to watch over the discipline and conduct of our beloved regiment, which contains our younger brothers, and sons, and relatives, and by advice, and admonition should it ever prove necessary, to correct irregularity.

We cheerfully acknowledge that no occasion has been offered for such action on our part, and you must do us the justice, to admit, that since the Veteran organization first donned a uniform, in April, 1861, in support of civil authority and as an acknowledged auxiliary to the active regiment, it has never afforded occasion for the objection more specious than real to which we are referring.

The discipline and conduct of our Corps is under the control of its own officers, which has heretofore, we believe, been found sufficient for all practical purposes.

That the Commanding officer of the active regiment is not able to assume control over the discipline and conduct of the Veteran organization on official occasions, or be accountable for their action, is a fact which we must be pardoned for neither considering unfortunate or regrettable.

We do not think, on public grounds, that it would be wise or prudent to accede to such a suggestion, and we see many reasons against it.

We are glad to perceive that you voluntarily concede that there was never in the formation of the uniformed battalion of the Veteran organization any intention of antagonizing or injuring the active regiment, and we think you might have gone further, and honestly declared that in its quarter century of existence, it never has antagonized or injured the active regiment.

We cannot admit, because it is historically inaccurate, your statement "that the uniformed battalion was organized for the purpose of strengthening the Veteran Association by increasing the interest of its members in its affairs."

Interest is thereby undoubtedly increased, and the change of uniform, made several years ago to one more distinctive, serviceable and suitable, certainly improved its efficiency, but we invite your attention to Mr. William Swinton's "History of the Seventh Regiment," (published in 1870,) which describes the formation of our uniformed battalion at the Regimental Armory on April 19, 1861, and the reasons for its formation.

It was then officially recognized by the late Major-General Charles W. Sandford, Commanding First Division, N. G. S. N. Y., who supplied it with arms and accoutrements, and by the late Colonel Marshall Lefferts, of the active regiment, who subsequently became our Colonel and wore our present uniform.

It will not, we trust, be considered too much of a digression to invite your recollection to the many occasions heretofore, in which the commanding officer and other officers of the active regiment have officially recognized the uniformed battalion, and availed of the auxiliary aid of the Veteran organization in matters of regimental concern.

We have to lament, therefore, the recent and, permit us to add, unjustifiable change of front, exemplified in the before-mentioned request.

You have conceded that "for many years entire harmony existed between the Veteran Association and the officers and members of the Regiment," and, you will permit us to add, we see no reason why it should not continue so far as we are concerned.

We believe it still does exist between the Veteran organization and the members of the regiment, who look to membership in our ranks, when they have honorably and faithfully completed their enlistments, and find they can no longer conveniently perform further ordinary military duty.

With us, under our Charter, they will not only be able to contribute to the benevolent objects therein mentioned, and

“promote social union and fellowship,” but also “preserve and continue the recollections of service in the National Guard” by uniting in such military drill, duty or exercise, as we may continue to deem necessary to make our battalion efficient for times of public emergency, and ready for such service as the Commander-in-Chief of this State is authorized to require.

In conclusion, we have to invite your attention to our first reply of September 29, 1885, which contains the expressions of our real grievance.

We believe that the Commanding officer of the active regiment, in a circular published February 19, 1884, and again in a statement dated February 26, 1884, and later in a pamphlet published in July of that year, in each of which he used his official designation without authority, causelessly and injuriously reflected upon and maligned the Veteran organization, of which he was at one time the Major and in which he is still a member.

If he really had any grievance or assumed to believe that anything in the Charter or organization of the Veterans could be advantageously amended, and had frankly stated the same to our Board of Officers or in general meeting, he would have been received in a kindly spirit, and such suggestions respectfully entertained and considered even although they might be at variance with his past conduct.

He did not choose however to take such a course, although it is the usual one which gentlemen have a right to expect.

We cannot, therefore, but feel that the gentlemen who united in the before-mentioned request, and who have undertaken to approve the conduct on which we are animadverting, have taken thereby a regrettable course, not in accordance with the traditions of our regiment, and thereby done us injustice.

To say that the above-mentioned publications were intended to be impersonal although deliberately addressed to this organization, is to offer an explanation therefor which we find ourselves unable favorably to consider.

In closing this communication, we indulge the hope that the gentlemen, who united in the before-mentioned request, will, in time, perceive that their action was not induced from any substantial cause, and that one of the best ways to further the prosperity of the active regiment, is to cultivate and maintain, as in past years, the closest and most fraternal relations with the Veteran organization.

We beg to advise you that at a Special Meeting of the Board of Management of the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y., held on the 16th day of December, 1885, the entire correspondence was laid before them, maturely considered, and the following was unanimously adopted :

Resolved, That the report of the Conference Committee of this Board be accepted, and their action in every particular be and is hereby approved, that no further action be taken by said Committee until an official and formal compliance to their request of September 29th, 1885, be made in

a manner as public and as broad as the publications issued February 19th and 24th, and of July, 1884, over the Official Signature of the Commandant of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y.

We have the honor to be very respectfully,

Your obedient Servants,

E. M. CRAWFORD, Ex. Colonel,

E. G. ARTHUR, Captain Co. "I."

HENRY W. T. MALL, Captain Co. "C."

L. G. WOODHOUSE, Lieut. Co. "D."

H. L. FREELAND, Adjutant.

Committee of the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment

N. G. S. N. Y.



